302 Men as well as women derive great satisfaction from these strange ornaments.

304 The tattoing procedure is extremely painful.

It begins when the child reaches the age of eight. As might be expected, the child does not surrender of his own will to this agony; but he is taken by force, thrown upon the ground, and deprived of any motion.

[305] Then the painter traces the designs on the child's body with a sharp agouti tooth, [115] drawing blood.

[306] The indelible juice of the genipap is then applied to the incisions. These intentional wounds usually become inflamed, and fever sometimes ensues. For this reason, the operation is performed as a rule during the winter months, when the effects of the heat are less intense.

It is slow work: the first wounds are permitted to heal before the task proceeds. This renders the procedure so leisurely that the painting is only completed when the youth is nearing twenty.

304 69 It thus seems to be a sort of blood initiation -- a social bond -- a consecrated tie -- which, like the individual ring in a chain, connects every member of the tribe to every other.

It is their most intimate bond and its origin, according to tradition, goes back to Caru-Sacaebê.

XVII

Time measurements -- Beliefs -- Burial customs.

[315] The Munduruca call the sun casi.

They differentiate summer and winter, calling the former coatu and the latter ixi.

They say that winter begins when the chestnuts begin to fall. And indeed the fruits of the chestnut (Bertholetia excelsa) begin to fall as soon as the rains come. [116]

They say that summer begins when the swallows appear.
They call the moon caxiate.
The full moon, caxi-tupambon-pimau.
The first quarter of the moon, caxi-quite.
The last quarter of the moon, caxi-hian.
Day, cabid; night, ximan.

To signify morning, noon, or afternoon, they point out with their index finger the location of the sun at that particular hour.

They call the stars cacuna.
The seven-star constellation (Hesperides) they call tauadira
The morning star, cabiara.
The Southern Cross, chenchema (ch as in Spanish muchacha).

They say that the earth is flat, but they know not where it begins or where it ends.

When a Mundurucu dies -- man or woman, elder, youth, or child -- his spirit, biumbe, passes on to another world, a sort of paradise which they call cabi.

The cabi consists of a boundless plain, in the midst of which stands an okcá large enough to hold them all.

Sometimes these spirits wander through the air and cause storms. Sometimes the Mundurucu spirit comes down to earth and turns into a matin tapirera to hunt at night. It so happens that throughout the valley of the Amazon the repeated cries of a bird may be heard during the night, echoing over and again the same syllables -- "matin tapirera."

Beyond this life, beyond the grave, there is no more pain and no realm set aside for the torture of spirits. Life beyond the grave is much sweeter than earthly existence. [117]

Once in the cabi they can never die; and if they need something they come down to earth in the form of thunder. There are no evil spirits intent on bringing ruin on the Mundurucu.

When one of these savages dies, his relatives dig a grave beneath [his?] own hammock, in the shape of a vertical cylinder. They lower the body into it, head uppermost, folded in the posture of the foetus in the maternal womb.